



## **SUBSISTENCE HARVESTS OF PACIFIC HALIBUT IN ALASKA, 2003**

Division of Subsistence, Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
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Under contract to the National Marine Fisheries Service, the Division of Subsistence of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game conducted a study to estimate the subsistence harvests of Pacific halibut in Alaska in 2003. The full results of the study can be found in Division of Subsistence Technical Paper No. 288, "Subsistence Harvests of Pacific Halibut in Alaska, 2003" (December 2004). Key points in the report are the following:

- In May 2003, the NMFS published final federal regulations for a subsistence halibut fishery in Alaska. Residents of 117 rural communities and members of 123 tribes are eligible to participate. Fishers must obtain a subsistence halibut registration certificate (SHARC) from NMFS before fishing ([www.fakr.noaa.gov/ram/subsistence/halibut.htm](http://www.fakr.noaa.gov/ram/subsistence/halibut.htm); 800-304-4846).
- A one-page survey form was mailed to 11,635 SHARC holders in early 2004. After three mailings and some supplemental community visits, 7,593 surveys (65.3%) were returned. Participation in the survey was voluntary.
- An estimated 4,942 individuals subsistence fished for halibut in 2003 (see Figure 6, below).
- The estimated subsistence harvest was 43,926 fish for 1,041,330 pounds net weight.
- Of this total, 72.3% was harvested with setline gear (longline or skate) and 27.7% was harvested with hand-operated gear (handline or rod and reel).
- The largest subsistence harvests occurred in southeast Alaska (Halibut Regulatory Area 2C), at 60.3% of the total, followed by southcentral Alaska (Area 3A) at 26.9%. Table 4 and Figure 7 from the final report (below) give more details on harvests by gear type and area.
- SHARC holders also harvested an estimated 10,784 halibut (245,947 pounds net weight) while sport fishing in 2003.
- Based on place of residence of SHARC holders, communities with the largest subsistence halibut harvests in 2003 were Sitka and Kodiak (the eligible communities with the largest populations) (see Figure 15, below).
- An estimated 14,870 rockfish were harvested by 1,239 fishers in the subsistence halibut fishery in 2003. Most (67.0%) were harvested in southeast Alaska.
- An estimated 3,298 lingcod were harvested by 699 fishers in the subsistence halibut fishery in 2003. Most (51.1%) were harvested in southeast Alaska.
- Based on preliminary data from the International Pacific Halibut Commission and this study, the estimated halibut removal in Alaska in 2003 was 83.065 million pounds, net weight. Subsistence harvests accounted for 1.3% of this total (see Figure 25, below).
- The report concludes that the project was, overall, a success, with good public outreach, good response rates, and a reliable estimate of subsistence halibut harvests.
- The report recommends that harvest study continue for at least two more years in order to evaluate trends in the fishery.

**For a copy of the full report, go to [www.subsistence.adfg.state.ak.us](http://www.subsistence.adfg.state.ak.us), or call the Division of Subsistence of ADF&G at 907-267-2353 (Anchorage) or 907-465-4147 (Juneau).**

Table 4. Estimated Alaska Subsistence Harvests of Halibut by SHARC Type, Regulatory Area, and Gear Type, 2003<sup>1</sup>

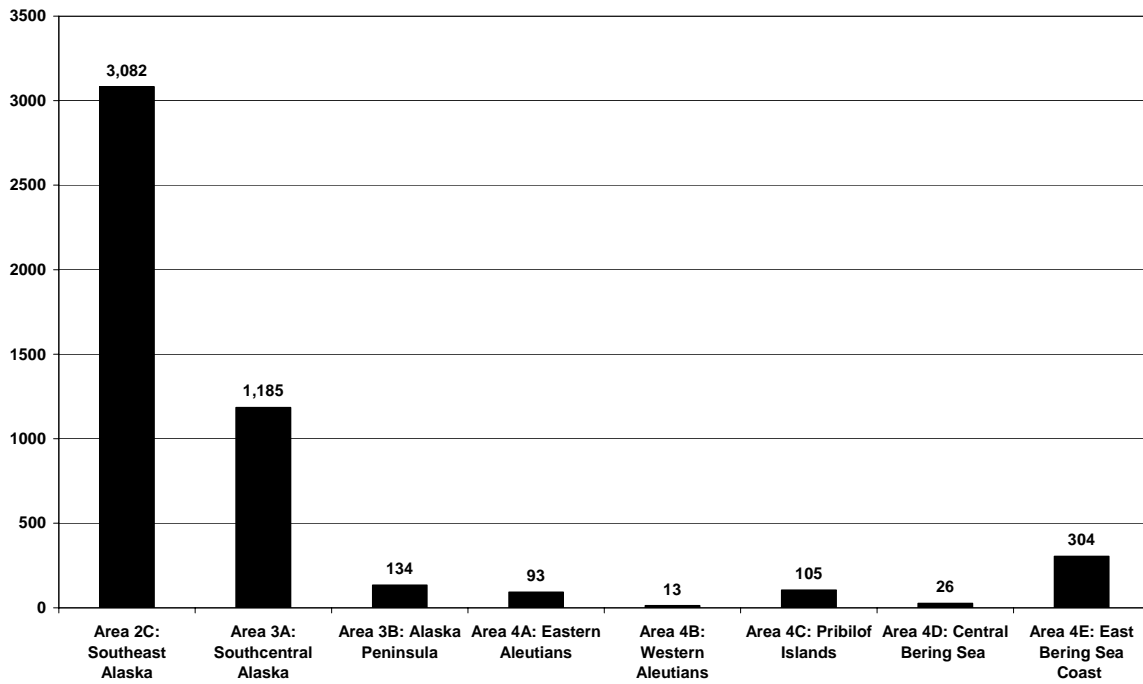
SHARC Type	Halibut Regulatory Area	Number of SHARCs Issued	Estimated Harvest by Gear Type <sup>2</sup>										
			Setline (Fixed) Gear			Hand-Operated Gear			All Gear				
			Estimated Number Fished	Estimated Number Harvested	Estimated Pounds Harvested	Estimated Number Fished	Estimated Number Harvested	Estimated Pounds Harvested	Estimated Number Fished	Estimated Number Harvested	95% C.I. Percent (Number)	Estimated Pounds Harvested	95% C.I. Percent (Pounds)
Tribal	2C	3,132	793	8,085	239,225	264	1,434	32,193	968	9,518	10.3%	271,416	11.8%
Tribal	3A	936	208	2,102	51,085	191	1,727	35,477	358	3,828	8.3%	86,563	10.7%
Tribal	3B	204	43	502	9,293	59	380	9,035	90	884	26.1%	18,328	26.6%
Tribal	4A	70	9	31	376	42	323	11,269	45	353	52.7%	11,645	46.3%
Tribal	4B	6	2	11	198	2	8	180	4	19	73.7%	378	79.1%
Tribal	4C	277	44	707	11,698	73	504	11,690	101	1,211	60.2%	23,388	46.8%
Tribal	4D	47	19	67	3,936	2	8	444	25	75	26.7%	4,380	24.6%
Tribal	4E	906	69	803	10,116	183	2,244	36,528	245	3,046	17.0%	46,640	12.9%
Tribal	All	5,578	1,187	12,308	325,927	816	6,628	136,816	1,836	18,934	7.3%	462,738	7.8%
Rural	2C	4,095	1,832	12,027	299,259	489	2,938	57,283	2,114	14,963	3.5%	356,543	3.7%
Rural	3A	1,674	534	4,854	116,582	397	3,634	76,467	827	8,485	5.4%	193,050	5.5%
Rural	3B	59	22	162	3,391	34	289	6,247	44	450	13.1%	9,637	18.3%
Rural	4A	84	33	324	6,082	25	153	3,000	48	476	24.0%	9,082	20.4%
Rural	4B	18	9	37	1,281	4	17	812	9	55	172.7%	2,094	194.6%
Rural	4C	12	0	0	0	4	23	368	4	23	147.8%	368	140.4%
Rural	4D	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Rural	4E	112	11	33	336	39	506	7,481	59	540	56.9%	7,818	62.7%
Rural	All	6,057	2,441	17,437	426,931	992	7,560	151,658	3,106	24,992	3.1%	578,592	3.1%
All	2C	7,227	2,625	20,112	538,484	753	4,372	89,476	3,082	24,481	4.5%	627,959	5.5%
All	3A	2,610	742	6,956	167,667	588	5,361	111,944	1,185	12,313	4.5%	279,613	5.0%
All	3B	263	65	664	12,684	93	669	15,282	134	1,334	17.9%	27,965	18.5%
All	4A	154	42	355	6,458	67	476	14,269	93	829	25.8%	20,727	26.9%
All	4B	24	11	48	1,479	6	25	992	13	74	105.4%	2,472	134.8%
All	4C	289	44	707	11,698	77	527	12,058	105	1,234	59.1%	23,756	46.1%
All	4D	50	19	67	3,936	2	8	444	26	75	26.7%	4,380	24.6%
All	4E	1,018	80	836	10,452	222	2,750	44,009	304	3,586	16.8%	54,458	14.2%
All	All	11,635	3,628	29,745	752,858	1,808	14,188	288,474	4,942	43,926	3.6%	1,041,330	3.9%

<sup>1</sup> SHARC = Subsistence halibut registration certificate.

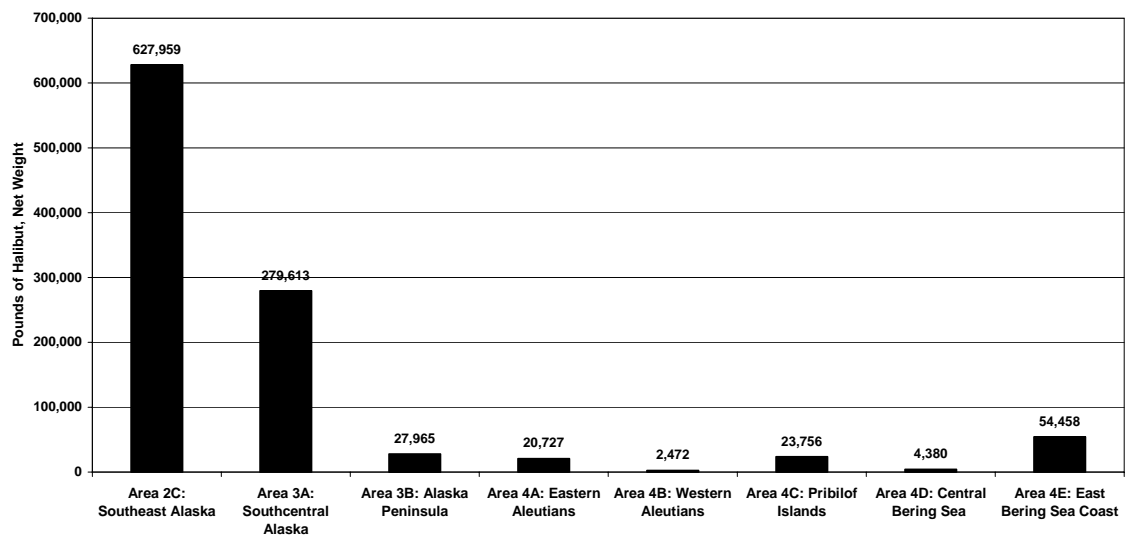
<sup>2</sup> Pounds are net (dressed) weight. Net weight = 75% of round weight. Setline = longline or skate. Hand-operated gear = rod and reel or handline.

Source: Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Subsistence Survey, 2004

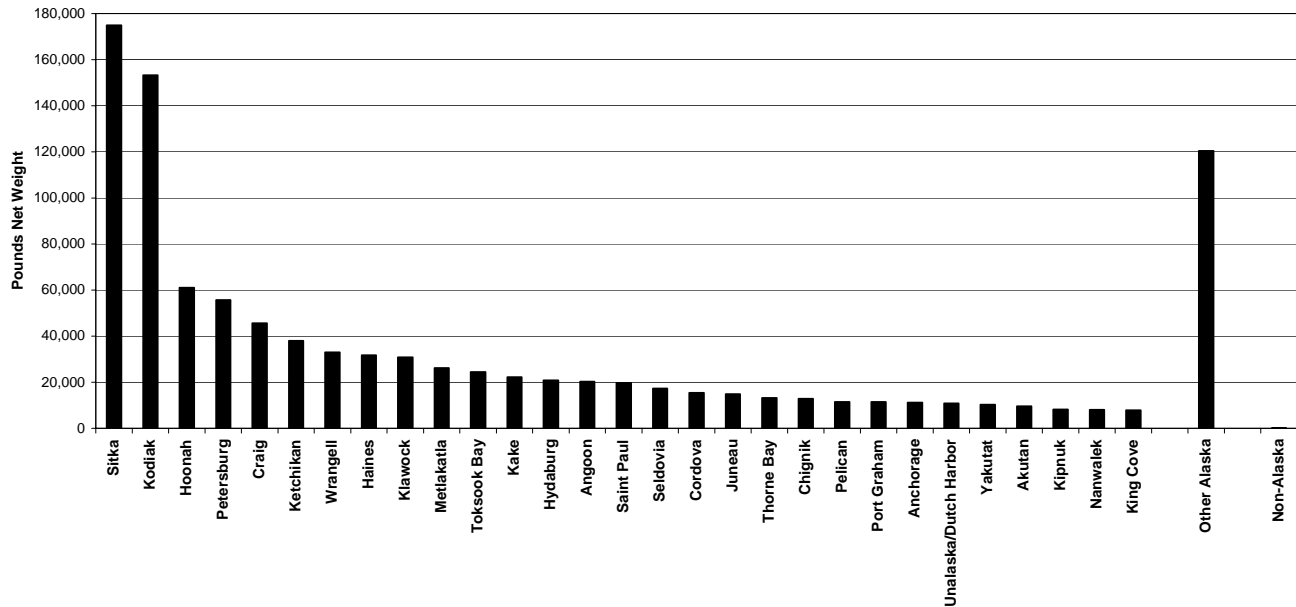
**Figure 6. Estimated Number of Subsistence Halibut Fishers in Alaska, 2003, by Regulatory Area**



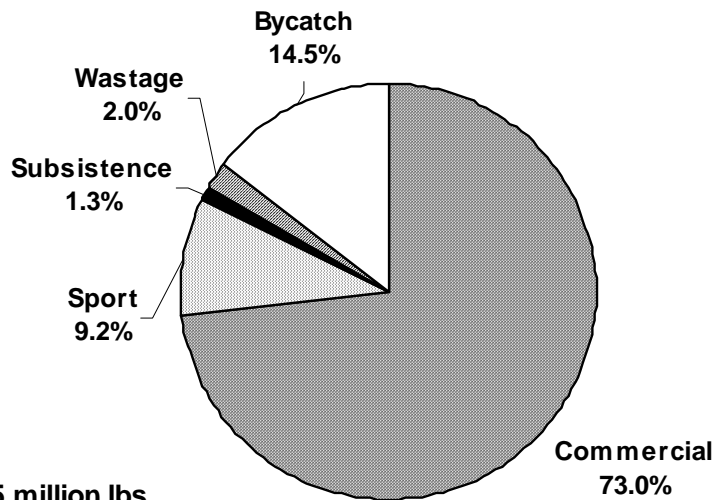
**Figure 7. Estimated Subsistence Harvest of Halibut in Alaska, 2003, by Regulatory Area, in Pounds Net Weight**



**Figure 15. Alaska Subsistence Halibut Harvests by Place of Residence, 2003**



**Figure 25. Halibut Removals, Alaska, 2003**



**N = 83.065 million lbs,  
net weight**

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